

S.K.I.P.

Strategies with Kids | Information for Parents

Keeping Kids Safe



Children aren't being naughty when they put themselves in danger. They need to learn about ways to keep safe as they explore their world.

“Have basic rules. You can play with sticks outside, not in the house”

Keeping kids safe

Keeping your child safe can be tricky as they turn into curious toddlers who put things in their mouths, climb, open doors and reach up and touch everything they possibly can. All this exploring is an important part of their development. It's better to make them safe, so they can enjoy this time in their lives.

If they do put themselves in danger, punishment such as smacking doesn't teach children anything. Instead make their environment safe and teach them how to keep safe.

“Keep explaining about hot - with bath, cooking, drinks etc.”



Things that could help

“Ruth ran away one day. She just took off to the neighbours. We were frantic and when she came back I thought I needed to smack her to show her how naughty she’d been. Then she said she just wanted to see her friend so we put her in her room so we could all calm down. Then we had a talk - I don’t think she even knew what she had done was wrong.”

- Think about what your child can reach as they start crawling, walking and putting everything they can in their mouth. Put precious things up high and keep an eye out for small things they might choke on.
- Toys should be matched to their age. Be careful of toys that have little bits that might come off, or might suffer under chewing and dribbling.
- Household chemicals and poisons and all medicines should be up high or in child proof cupboards.

“They all explore as part of their development. Make them safe.”



- Spend some time teaching safe behaviour. Explain very clearly why they shouldn't do something and show them another way. Be patient – you'll have to repeat these messages several times.
- Empty buckets of water when you've finished with them.



- Put pots on the back elements and turn handles inwards – or put a guard around the stove.
- Put a gate over stairs and over doorways where these are hazards for small children.
- Fix shelving etc to the wall.
- Put lighters and matches where children can't find them. Teach your child to take matches and lighters straight to an adult if they find them.
- Unplug appliances, and tape loose cords.
- Use a fireguard around fires and heaters.

“If they hit the cat, take their hand and stroke the cat and say ‘be gentle’.”

Road safety

- Hold hands and don't let your child run ahead. If your hands are busy ask them to hold your bag or part of your clothing.
- Set a good example. Choose safe places to cross the road and explain what you're doing.
- Ask them where they think you should cross. Talk about the best places for stopping to look for traffic
- If your child does run away, or runs onto the street, make them safe. Show them how frightened they made you. Show them a better way.

- Tell them why they have to sit in a car seat every time you put them in the car.
- Make the seat interesting. Decorate it with stickers, take along some toys they can play with.
- Make sure you can see each other through the rear vision mirror as you drive.



- Don't drive unless the restraint is done up. If your child undoes the straps, stop the car. Explain that you're not going to start it again until the buckle is done up.
- Distract them on long journeys with games and music.
- Plan long trips around sleep time so they doze off. Or leave really early in the morning so they are sleepy.
- Reward good behaviour, tell them they're great.

“He enjoys pressing the button at the crossing.”

“Spend time teaching safe behaviour.”

“We kept telling our two-and-a-half-year old not to slam doors. He didn't really seem to understand what we meant when we told him he'd hurt his fingers. So we got some green beans and slammed the door on them and showed him what they looked like. We explained that's what will happen to your fingers. He was intrigued and did actually stop slamming doors and would tell others to be careful.

Although I did find him a couple of days later shutting a banana in the door!”

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Skip supports parents and caregivers
to raise their children in a positive way.

For more information go to:

www.familyservices.govt.nz/skip/

Email: **skipinfo@msd.govt.nz**

or phone: **04 916 3300**

For more information on support for parents go to

www.familyservices.govt.nz

and click on National Directory.



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